



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Isiah Leggett
County Executive

Uma Ahluwalia
Director

COMMISSION ON JUVENILE JUSTICE

Meeting Minutes

March 15, 2016

CITIZEN MEMBERS PRESENT: Shezhad Akhtar, Maria Blaeuer Carole Brown, Bonnie DeWitt, Chris Fogleman (Vice-Chair), Karen Frances, Mike Gruenberg, Stacey Gurian-Sherman, Barbara Holtz, Mehul Madia, Julie Malloy, Jessica Markham, Roberta Pieczenik, Carlean Ponder (Chair), Erin Penn, Wendy Pulliam, and Tisha Wiley.

AGENCY MEMBERS PRESENT: Amy Bills, Francha Davis, Frank Duncan, Susan Farag, Captain Jim Humphries, Michael Subin, Ira Thomas and Elijah Wheeler

ABSENT MEMBERS: Risa Mainprize, Perry Paylor, Mary Siegfried and Jessica Wilcox.

STAFF LIAISON PRESENT: Diane Lininger

EMERITUS MEMBERS: Lee Haller

GUESTS: Matt Paris and Marji Josh

Commission on Juvenile Justice

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facsimile

- I. **Speakers** – Carlean Ponder Chair, introduced Elijah Wheeler, Disproportionate Minority Contact Coordinator – to speak on the disconnection of black youth and Montgomery County's response to recent report
 - a. Questions sent to Elijah prior to the meeting:
 - i. What data, trends, information or context is not evident in the Community Foundation's report?
 1. There is a report on African American youth in MoCo where they surveyed 1200 disconnected youth between ages 16 and 24 about what barriers they thought youth had. There are large disparities in LGBTQ and homeless youth of color. This has to do with the large class and race issues in MoCo, but more so race issues over class issues, even though youth of colors' graduation rates have increased and raw arrest numbers for youth of color have decreased.
 - ii. What is your take on the MoCo youth and the data as compared to the State and nationally?
 1. We should not compare MoCo to the state, because we should be focused on fixing MoCo before we look at what needs to be fixed all over the state. It is important to look at the school to prison pipeline report. Achievement gap should not be placed solely on MCPS, suspension and expulsion rates have gone down but percentage-wise have increased for youth of color.
 - iii. What do you see systems (e.g., schools, workforce, juvenile justice, communities) doing well to help youth connect? Are there any cities that are having particularly success? Any programs you see as having especially great outcomes?
 1. The Obama administration has created an initiative nationally known as "MBK" that looks at policies and opportunities to help ensure access to pathways for success for young men and boys of color.
 2. We should include youth and their family members in our conversations (at meetings and not at meetings)
 - iv. Are you familiar with any effective strategies that help adults (teachers, probation officers, school resources officers, police) connect to youth - and I suppose interrupt/disrupt the problematic engagement/escalation(s) with youth?
 1. It is important to advance youth development training
 - v. What about programs that support the youth to improve strategies to connect? What about programs that support their families?
 1. We are resource rich in MoCo, but the problem is having adequate availability to those resources.
 2. It is important to evaluate and vet more of the programs to make sure they are useful and appropriate
 - vi. Who are the particular social sector entities who should/could be working on this? Government, agencies, Funders (local or national - Kellogg, Skillman, Casey, Foundation for Open Society), nonprofit organizations etc.
 - a. Everyone is affected
 - b. If the public wants to make a change, and has the will, they can

- vii. What can the Commission do to help support these efforts?
 - 1. Commission can work on becoming subject matter experts – for example, informing judges on issues rather than asking what they think the issues are
 - 2. Commission can be more proactive rather than reactive
 - viii. In your opinion, what can the CJJ do to be more effective? How can we have more of a voice in matters directly affecting the youth we are tasked to serve?
 - ix. The report has a lot of concrete suggestions for MCPS, are any of those suggestions ones where you feel that the support of the commission would be helpful to you in achieving implementation or buy-in from MCPS? Which ones? What support do you need? (a letter? a visit?)
 - 1. When it comes to societal issues, we should change the term achievement gap, to gap in opportunities and resources, because that really is the problem. There is no achievement gap, but really just a gap in the availability of opportunities and resources.
 - x. Have you communicated with Montgomery Works (the new Workforce Development Board) regarding your recommendations around re-engaging youth - were they responsive? What kind of alignment is there between the recommendations of the report and the mission/vision of Montgomery Works?
 - 1. Not yet, but the work force has changed, even though the economy has gotten better.
 - xi. The report references DC's re-engagement center (page 9, recommendation B), which is jointly funded by DC's State Education Agency (OSSE), DYRS and other agencies as well. Is Montgomery Co. proposing a similar funding model for a re-engagement center here? Do you think a centralized center is appropriate for Montgomery Co? One thing that makes the Re-Engagement model viable is the availability of 1) multiple educational agencies 2) multiple pathways to a diploma. Do you have any ideas about how you will make that model work here should you attempt it?
 - 1. The DC education system and the reengagement center for disengaged youth would work well in MoCo, but Mo Co doesn't have the funds available and is not able to do it right now.
 - 2. Currently MoCo is focusing on 2 milestones from My Brother's Keeper initiative that was presented in the MoCo youth summit in May 2015. They want:
 - a. All students to graduate high school
 - b. Keep all youth safe from violent crime and awarded second chances.
 - 3. It would be a good idea to schedule a trip to DC to see the center, decide what it is that we want, and then present it at a budget meeting.
 - b. Mike Subin discussed generational poverty, the family justice center, and having the CJCC create this center.
 - c. Commission would also like to have ex-officio members give agency updates every week
 - d. Commission would like a schedule of relevant events, so that we can go to all of the various events in the community
- II. **Old Business** – January and February 2016 meeting minutes voted on and approved with one amendment (Motion: Chris Fogleman, Second: Bonnie DeWitt)

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- a. Stacy Gurian-Sherman – Item number 2 under feedback and goals that were given in the February minutes, should be changed to add a sentence about youth and family involvement

III. Vote on Liaison to Thomas Edison High School of Technology (Motion: Francha Davis, second: Carlean Ponder)

- a. Bonnie DeWitt

IV. Update and vote on letters sent out from the retreat

- a. All letters were sent out and received
- b. Stacy Gurian-Sherman – Commission's position on senate bill was a success

V. Announcements

- a. A huge thank-you to the Ad-hoc Retreat committee and the Executive Committee for putting on an excellent retreat. Another big thank-you to our speakers Karen Francis, Marji Josh and Ira Thomas. We had a record number of attendees and letters that were voted on are attached.
- b. Annual meeting with the Juvenile Judges will be held on April 19th at the Executive Office Building, 9th floor conference room, 101 Monroe Street, Rockville MD. Directions for parking will be given out closer to the event. Each Committee needs to come up with 5 questions for the Judges by April 4, 2016.
- c. May meeting – Commissioners will need to start working on the annual work plan which is due at the end of June. Please make this a priority in your committee meetings.
- d. Office of Legislative oversight put out a report on School to Prison pipeline. Diane emailed out the link to the report information on March 8, 2016.
- e. Diane is working on setting up a visit at Dr. Thomas's alternative education program – will let you know the date when it is finalized.

VI. Skipped over Committee Reports because of time constraints

VII. Meeting Adjourned – 9:02pm